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ABSTRACT

Canada is one of the few democratic societies that has addressed the issue of cultural and linguistic pluralism, incorporated it into its definition of national identity, and formulated it as a formal state policy of multiculturalism. Canada has always been an ethnically heterogeneous society, and the view that Canada values the cultural mosaic has always held prominence. Recognition of the potential divisiveness of issues of culture and schooling led to the shift in control of education at confederation from the national to the provincial arena to allow for the expression of differences. The main difference in multicultural policies is between an ethnocultural support-service orientation, as pursued in Ontario and Nova Scotia, and a language-based view of multicultural education as practiced in Saskatchewan, Alberta, and Manitoba. In either situation, the complexities of perpetuating different cultural traditions are evident. What minority parents most want for their children, however, is competence and not the condescending teaching of fragmented versions of their culture. (Contains 115 references.) (SLD)

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